

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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FATAL GYROCOPTER CRASH AT
CAPE GIRARDEAU REGIONAL
AIRPORT IN SCOTT COUNTY,
MISSOURI ON MAY 22, 2022

Accident No.: WPR22FA184

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Interview of: MEGAN GREGORY

Monday,
May 23, 2022

APPEARANCES:

STEPHEN STEIN, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MICHAEL WALTER

GREG GREMMINGER

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:19 p.m. CDT)

MR. STEIN: Stephen Stein with the NTSB. It's May 23, 2022, about 1:19 p.m. Central Daylight Time. I'm here with --

Now, you can go ahead and state your name and spell it.

MS. GREGORY: Hi. My name is Megan Gregory, M-E-G-A-N, G-R-E-G-O-R-Y.

MR. STEIN: Thank you, and do you consent to being recorded?

MS. GREGORY: Yes. Yes, I consent --

MR. STEIN: Great.

MS. GREGORY: -- to being recorded.

MR. STEIN: Excellent. Okay.

INTERVIEW OF MEGAN GREGORY

BY MR. STEIN:

Q. So, Megan, go ahead, and I'm just going to ask you to kind of give us a little bit of background. Tell us what you, what you observed, and we'll just watch you.

A. Yeah.

Q. You can use the, obviously, use the --

A. Yeah.

Q. -- (indiscernible). Yeah.

A. So, I came in yesterday morning to fly with another student of ours in our Gyroplane. So, when I first come in, you know, we started (indiscernible), and --

Q. Yeah.

1 A. -- when we come through, you know, we have a radio in there
2 that I can hear, you know, a tower talking to people. And when I
3 first stopped, I saw him in the blue Gyro. Engine started at this
4 point, getting ready to go taxi. And by the time I went through
5 our office, went to the bathroom, came back out, he'd already
6 started to taxi. And I heard him talking to tower, just friendly
7 banter about the color of the Gyro, stuff like that.

8 And then, I hopped in our golf cart and came over here to
9 Hangar 19, which is the (indiscernible) hangar now across from our
10 main hangar. I came over, opened our hangar door, you know,
11 brought our Gyro out, started greenlighting it. And while I
12 (indiscernible), I heard a loud crash, which, I had been to
13 (indiscernible) before where there was a crash, so -- I knew it
14 wasn't an explosion, but I heard just, you know, a crash, that it
15 sounded like something striking or something hitting the ground.

16 And then, when I looked over, I saw something coming out of
17 the sky. At the time, you know, when I heard the noise and
18 looked, I just processed something coming down, so I don't know if
19 it was the Gyro coming down or if it was, you know, the Gyro came
20 down, noise traveled to me, and then something, you know, followed
21 down after it, whether it be a part or something. Heard the
22 noise, looked over, saw something coming down.

23 I immediately jumped in our golf cart, sped back over to our
24 hanger, and by that time, Yurgan (ph.) had showed up, and I told
25 them, I'm like, hey, something crashed. I'm going to call tower

1 and see if we're good to go over there and help. Called tower. I
2 said, hey, we saw something crash. Are we good to go? And when I
3 called tower, I heard him on the phone with, I assume, emergency
4 services, talking about the crash (indiscernible). So, I jumped
5 in our old truck with Yurgan, and after I called tower and he
6 said, go, we just started heading down there. And by the time we
7 got there -- I don't know if I need to describe the crash to you
8 when I rolled up, or how he looked, or --

9 Okay. Yeah. That was pretty much it. I heard a loud bang,
10 looked out, saw something falling, and --

11 Q. Can you --

12 (Crosstalk)

13 Q. -- take me through the -- how you saw the aircraft falling?
14 So, you heard the loud bang, you looked up, and then show us
15 exactly how the aircraft was falling.

16 A. So, when I looked out, it was high enough where, you know, I
17 saw it above the horizon line.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And I just saw something falling. As soon as I registered
20 something falling, I didn't, you know, sit and stare at it. I
21 just immediately hopped in and started going. I wish I would
22 have, because, one, later, I was wondering, you know, which way he
23 took off from, because I didn't hear the radio transmission for
24 that; but, two, you know, what state it was in. But I just saw
25 something falling and immediately ran back to go get in the truck,

1 but --

2 Q. Did you see the orientation of the aircraft that was falling?

3 No?

4 A. No, no.

5 Q. What did the loud crack sound like?

6 A. It sounded -- at first, when I first heard it, I thought he
7 hit, you know, a bird or wires, but I'm like, there's no wires
8 over there, so he didn't hit any wires. And, you know, I couldn't
9 see if there was a bird or not. I just heard the crash and saw it
10 falling. But then, when I got to the crash scene, you know,
11 after, you know, I calmed down after pulling him out
12 (indiscernible), and then emergency services came and took him. I
13 saw the tail had been, you know, chopped, so half of me was
14 wondering, you know, if the rotor, you know, somehow came down and
15 chopped the tail, because that would explain that noise that
16 sounded like, you know, just a heavy strike, and then, you know,
17 something coming down, but --

18 Q. So, that strike that you heard, did it sound like a whoosh,
19 did it sound like a ping, did it sound --

20 A. It sounded --

21 Q. -- like a crack?

22 A. It was a crack. It was --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- a loud crack --

25 Q. It was a crack?

1 A. -- (indiscernible). Yeah.

2 Q. Okay. All right. That's very helpful.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Okay. That's fantastic. Oh, did you hear -- happen to
5 catch -- did you hear his engine at all, the sound --

6 A. I didn't process it.

7 Q. -- when he was taking off or anything? Okay, right.

8 A. No.

9 Q. No, you didn't hear that?

10 A. Yeah. I was focused on all this, and, and when I finally
11 (indiscernible) I see something's happening, that's when I heard
12 that crack and just saw something come down.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. So --

15 MR. STEIN: All right. Anybody have any questions?

16 MR. WALTER: Yeah.

17 BY MR. WALTER:

18 Q. Did you -- was the door, the pilot side door, intact on
19 there, or did you pull it off, or --

20 A. So, we pulled it off the left side. It was already open.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. And, you know, like, he was sitting on the left side. And it
23 was open. There was Plexiglas on top of him. There was also -- I
24 wasn't sure what it was. I figured it was just something he had
25 in the cockpit. It was kind of like, you know those visors you

- 1 put on your car to protect it from, you know, the sun?
- 2 Q. Yeah, the (indiscernible) --
- 3 A. Yeah. It was gray.
- 4 Q. -- visor, yeah.
- 5 A. That was on top of him, too, and Plexiglas --
- 6 Q. (Indiscernible) --
- 7 A. -- came on top of him.
- 8 Q. -- too.
- 9 A. Yeah, yeah.
- 10 Q. Yeah, it just comes off. It was --
- 11 A. Yeah.
- 12 Q. -- laying outside.
- 13 A. Yeah, yeah. We just kind of chucked all that after we got
- 14 there.
- 15 Q. But the door -- we found the door how far away? It was like,
- 16 it was like 200 feet.
- 17 A. Okay. (Indiscernible).
- 18 Q. That door was, yeah, 200 feet away.
- 19 A. Holy crap.
- 20 Q. Yeah. Did you throw it that far?
- 21 A. No, no. We didn't even open it.
- 22 Q. (Indiscernible). Yeah.
- 23 A. I wish I could throw something that far, you know.
- 24 Q. You didn't notice --
- 25 A. (Indiscernible) --

1 Q. -- the wind or anything carrying stuff around?

2 A. No, no.

3 Q. Okay. (Indiscernible). The other question I had, was the
4 seatbelt, was the seatbelt on him?

5 A. No, no, it wasn't on him.

6 Q. The seatbelt wasn't on him?

7 A. No, no.

8 Q. Okay. It's just a lap belt, right?

9 MR. GREMMINGER: Just a lap belt.

10 A. Yeah, it was just (indiscernible). When we got there -- and
11 I'm not a medical professional, but my uncle's a doctor. As soon
12 as we got there, you know, I've heard, you know, you may or may
13 not want to move people after a trauma scene, so I called him.
14 I'm like, hey, should we move him? I don't see any visible, you
15 know, injuries. He had a little bit of blood on his neck, but I
16 couldn't tell if it was a cut. I assumed later it came from his
17 nose and mouth, because when we started doing compressions, there
18 was like a blood clot that came out. You know, blood came out of
19 his nose and mouth. But no visible injuries otherwise. He was
20 just slumped over, you know, and his leg was, his (indiscernible).
21 And when we were getting him out, he was just limp.

22 I didn't feel a pulse the two times that I checked when we
23 first got there, and I called Paul. I checked for a pulse here
24 and here. Which, again, you know, I'm not a medical professional.
25 I don't know if I felt it in the right spot, but I didn't feel it

1 in either spot. He felt cold, but it was colder, you know,
2 yesterday morning, so if he was there for a couple of minutes, it
3 could have been where he got cold.

4 Q. And you guys were first on scene?

5 A. It was -- so, I'm sure you've talked to Cameron already, one
6 of the line guys. It was him and Christian in their little golf
7 cart. They got there just before we did. They stopped at the end
8 of that gravel road there; and then, they were running the rest of
9 the way there. (Indiscernible) pulled up in the truck, and we
10 just kind of went through the field, pulled off to the side, ran
11 over. Yurgan was holding the phone (indiscernible) gravel road,
12 and Christian was like (indiscernible).

13 Me and Cameron were over kind of working together to pull him
14 out of the Gyro, because the way he was sitting there, he was kind
15 of -- you know, his legs were twisted. If this is the Gyro, you
16 know, the door was here, you know, gone. It was just open. And
17 he was kind of twisted over and slumped over. So, when we were
18 trying to get him out, his leg kept catching on the
19 (indiscernible), so we had to lift his leg up and over, and I
20 actually had to have Cameron rotate his torso to kind of line up
21 his body the right kind of direction so his leg would kind of come
22 over. But I'm trying to think if there's anything else major.

23 I'm sure you noticed when you went over there, but I didn't
24 notice at the time, but, you know, I had gas all soaked into my
25 shoe and my sock, and I didn't notice until, by the time I came

1 back, you know, (indiscernible). I actually had a little bit,
2 just like a little bit of like stinging, like burning, just from
3 the gas, because I didn't realize it was there, and so I didn't
4 take my shoes off right away. But, yeah, I just smelled like gas
5 (indiscernible).

6 Q. Did Cameron or Christian unbuckle that seatbelt at all, do
7 you know?

8 A. I don't remember. I don't think so. But, I mean, if it was
9 a hard hit -- I, I know I didn't do it. Cameron and I were both
10 over there at the same time. I was focused on getting his legs
11 over the side (indiscernible), so maybe Cameron would have reached
12 over and done it, but I didn't notice it, so --

13 MR. STEIN: Okay. Anything else?

14 BY MR. WALTER:

15 Q. Do you know if Yurgan witnessed the accident?

16 A. Yeah. Well, actually, that, I wasn't sure. I don't think
17 so, because when I got there in the golf cart, when I was, you
18 know, frantic, I'm like, something crashed over there. He's like,
19 oh, oh, something crashed? And he just kind of seemed dazed for a
20 second. So, I don't think he saw it. I'm guessing he got here,
21 you know, right before it happened and walked out. But he was
22 outside when I, you know, rode back over there in the golf cart,
23 so I don't know.

24 MR. STEIN: Okay. Can you say and spell your name?

25 MR. WALTER: Michael Walter, M-I-C-H-A-E-L, W-A-L-T-E-R.

1 MR. STEIN: You, too, Greg.

2 MR. GREMMINGER: Greg Gremminger, G-R-E-G, G-R-E-M-M-I-N-G-E-
3 R.

4 MR. STEIN: Perfect. All right. I'm going to go ahead and
5 stop it.

6 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: FATAL GYROCOPTER CRASH AT
 CAPE GIRARDEAU REGIONAL
 AIRPORT IN SCOTT COUNTY,
 MISSOURI ON MAY 22, 2022
 Interview of Megan Gregory

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR22FA184

DATE: May 23, 2022

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.



Lisa D. Sevarino
Transcriber

1 of ours in our Gyroplane. So, when I first come in, you know, we
2 started (indiscernible), and - [ADDED BY MEGAN GREGORY 8/31/2023:
3 (This bit was me talking about how at Cape Copters we have a radio
4 in the office, so as I was walking through to get onto airport
5 grounds I could hear our the gyroplane on our radio talking with
6 tower. As I was walking through the office I could also see the
7 blue gyro starting to taxi out)]

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. -- when we come through, you know, we have a radio in there
10 that I can hear, you know, a tower talking to people. And when I
11 first stopped, I saw him in the blue Gyro. Engine started at this
12 point, getting ready to go taxi. And by the time I went through
13 our office, went to the bathroom, came back out, he'd already
14 started to taxi. And I heard him talking to tower, just friendly
15 banter about the color of the Gyro, stuff like that.

16 And then, I hopped in our golf cart and came over here to
17 Hangar 19, which is the (indiscernible) hangar now across from our
18 main hangar. I came over, opened our hangar door, you know,
19 brought our Gyro out, started greenlighting [ADDED BY MEGAN
20 GREGORY 8/31/2023: (I went out to preflight our gyro)] it. And
21 while I (indiscernible), I heard a loud crash, which, I had been
22 to [ADDED BY MEGAN GREGORY 8/31/2023: (I've been to a fly in

1 before for ultralights where a gyroplane crashed, but the incident
2 I had seen before was a gyroplane hitting the ground on short
3 final, just before the runway. It made a similar crack/crash
4 noise)](indiscernible) before where there was a crash, so -- I
5 knew it wasn't an explosion, but I heard just, you know, a crash,
6 that it sounded like something striking or something hitting the
7 ground.

8 And then, when I looked over, I saw something coming out of
9 the sky. At the time, you know, when I heard the noise and
10 looked, I just processed something coming down, so I don't know if
11 it was the Gyro coming down or if it was, you know, the Gyro came
12 down, noise traveled to me, and then something, you know, followed
13 down after it, whether it be a part or something. Heard the
14 noise, looked over, saw something coming down.

15 I immediately jumped in our golf cart, sped back over to our
16 hanger, and by that time, Yurgan (ph.) had showed up, and I told
17 them, I'm like, hey, something crashed. I'm going to call tower
18 and see if we're good to go over there and help. Called tower. I
19 said, hey, we saw something crash. Are we good to go? And when I
20 called tower, I heard him on the phone with, I assume, emergency
21 services, talking about the crash (indiscernible). So, I jumped
22 in our old truck with Yurgan, and after I called tower and he

1 Q. It was a crack?

2 A. -- (indiscernible). Yeah.

3 Q. Okay. All right. That's very helpful.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Okay. That's fantastic. Oh, did you hear -- happen to
6 catch -- did you hear his engine at all, the sound --

7 A. I didn't process it. [ADDED BY MEGAN GREGORY 8/31/2023:

8 [(Probably not helpful now but when he was taxing out when I first
9 came into the office, nothing stands out in my memory as sounding
10 weird with the engine)]

11 Q. -- when he was taking off or anything? Okay, right.

12 A. No.

13 Q. No, you didn't hear that?

14 A. Yeah. I was focused on all this, and, and when I finally
15 (indiscernible) I see something's happening, that's when I heard
16 that crack and just saw something come down.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. So --

19 MR. STEIN: All right. Anybody have any questions?

20 MR. WALTER: Yeah.

21 BY MR. WALTER:

22 Q. Did you -- was the door, the pilot side door, intact on

1 just kind of went through the field, pulled off to the side, ran
2 over. Yurgan was holding the phone (indiscernible) gravel road,
3 and Christian was like (indiscernible).

4 Me and Cameron were over kind of working together to pull him
5 out of the Gyro, because the way he was sitting there, he was kind
6 of -- you know, his legs were twisted. If this is the Gyro, you
7 know, the door was here, you know, gone. It was just open. And
8 he was kind of twisted over and slumped over. So, when we were
9 trying to get him out, his leg kept catching on the [ADDED BY
10 MEGAN GREGORY 8/31/2023: (His leg was stuck on the other side of
11 the cyclic, making it hard to lift his leg up and over it to get
12 him out)] (indiscernible), so we had to lift his leg up and over,
13 and I actually had to have Cameron rotate his torso to kind of
14 line up his body the right kind of direction so his leg would kind
15 of come over. But I'm trying to think if there's anything else
16 major.

17 I'm sure you noticed when you went over there, but I didn't
18 notice at the time, but, you know, I had gas all soaked into my
19 shoe and my sock, and I didn't notice until, by the time I came
20 back, you know, (indiscernible). I actually had a little bit,
21 just like a little bit of like stinging, like burning, just from
22 the gas, because I didn't realize it was there, and so I didn't